

National Day of Bangladesh

Publicity

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of IndependenceMd. Abdul Hamid
President of Bangladesh

Today is 26th March, our Independence and National Day. This year we are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of our Independence. On this occasion, I extend my heartfelt greetings and warm felicitations to my fellow countrymen living at home and abroad. On this historic day, I remember with profound respect the architect of our independent Bangladesh, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On the fateful night of March 25, 1971, the invading forces of Pakistan suddenly attacked the unarmed Bangladesh. In the early hours of March 26, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman officially declared the Independence of Bangladesh. We achieved an independent and sovereign Bangladesh through a nine-month long liberation war. I recall with deep respect the millions of martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the War of Liberation and we achieved our Independence for their supreme sacrifice. I also recall with deep reverence our Four National Leaders, valiant freedom-fighters, organizers, supporters, foreign friends and people from all walks of life who made contributions to attain our right to self-determination and freedom movement.

Bangabandhu always cherished a dream of building a happy and prosperous country along with attaining political emancipation. The present government has been rendering untiring efforts in materializing that dream of Bangabandhu. We have achieved enormous success in various areas of socio-economic development including poverty alleviation, education, health, human resources development, women empowerment, reduction of child and maternal mortality rates, elimination of gender discrimination and increase in average life expectancy. Rate of poverty has been dropped. Per capita income has tripled over the past decade. In various indicators of economic and social development, Bangladesh has been able to surpass not only the neighboring countries of South Asia, but also many developed countries.

Despite the negative impact of the Corona pandemic on the world economy, due to the timely and courageous steps taken by Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the government has been able to maintain the economic growth by countering the effects of Corona. Huge amount of remittances

sent by expatriate Bangladeshis has made an important contribution to keep the wheel of the economy rolling during this time. The government has announced 23 stimulus packages worth taka 1 lakh 24 thousand crore (\$14.8 billion) to keep the wheel of economy rolling. Arrangements have also been made to provide COVID-19 vaccine. Bangladesh ranks first in South Asia and 20th in the world in the 'COVID Resilience Ranking' compiled by the US news agency Bloomberg for successful handling of corona pandemic, economic revival and maintaining normal livelihoods. Through this, Bangladesh's image has been upheld around the world.

Recently, Bangladesh has received the final recommendation from the United Nations to her emergence from a least developed country to a developing one. It is a unique gift for the nation at the juncture of 'Mujibbarsho' and the 'Golden Jubilee' of our Independence. Bangladesh will turn into a developed and prosperous country in the world by 2041 by ensuring continuation of current development process, Insha Allah.

In pursuing our diplomatic objectives, the government has been consistent in upholding the principle of "Friendship to all, malice towards none" as enunciated by the Father of the Nation. Our achievement in the international arena, including the establishment of world peace, is also commendable. Despite being a densely populated country, Bangladesh has set a unique example of humanity in the world by sheltering millions of Rohingyas who have been tortured and forcibly deported from Myanmar. Bangladesh believes in a peaceful solution to this problem. I call upon the United Nations and the international community, including Myanmar, to take early and effective measures for permanent solution to this problem.

Japan is one of the pioneering countries that recognized Bangladesh on 10 February 1972. Since then, the relations between the two countries grew strength to strength setting an excellent example of trusted friendship, co-operation and development partnership. Japan is actively involved in several mega projects including Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Project, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Railway Bridge Construction Project, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport Expansion Project etc. Japan and Bangladesh are going to celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2022. I thank the people and the Government of Japan for being with us always and firmly believes that the friendship between the two countries will reach at greater heights in the days to come.

On the eve of 'Mujibbarsho' and the Golden Jubilee of our Independence, with the joint efforts of all, may our beloved motherland become a developed country free from hunger and poverty - this is my expectation on the great Independence Day.

Joi Bangla.
Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Md. Abdul Hamid

Yoshihide Suga
Prime Minister of Japan

On behalf of the government and people of Japan, I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations on the 50th anniversary of the Independence of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, as well as the centennial birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the first President of Bangladesh.

Fifty years ago, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman led Bangladesh to independence with his indomitable spirit. Japan was one of the first countries that recognized Bangladesh as a nation state right after its independence, and we had the privilege of welcoming Bangabandhu to Japan.

During his stay in Japan, Bangabandhu visited even farming and fishing villages in rural areas, where he interacted with many local Japanese citizens. He said he considered the development of Japan as a model to follow, and later he made tremendous efforts to strengthen bilateral ties. I understand that it was the idea of Bangabandhu himself to design the Bangladeshi national flag in a way that resembles the Japanese one, just like we are brothers.

Japan and Bangladesh, both having nostalgic yet beautiful landscape of paddy fields, have valued "heart-to-heart exchanges" and have developed profound interactions among citizens at a grassroots level.

Just as Japanese children tried hard and collected relief donations for Bangladesh in the aftermath of a cyclone at the time of its independence, Bangladesh offered to Japan in the form of relief funds and supplies when the Great East Japan Earthquake struck us 10 years ago. Our traditional friendship is now tied with a strong and firm bond under the spirit of trust, cooperation, and mutual benefit.

Regarding economic relations, Japan has consistently supported Bangladesh's efforts toward the realization of "Sonar Bangla" since its independence. Jamuna Multi-purpose Bridge, depicted on the 100 taka banknote, and Sonargon Hotel, built shortly after independence, have been the symbols of our friendship for a long time.

In recent years, Japan has actively supported the infrastructural development of Bangladesh, such as Dhaka MRT, Dhaka International Airport 3rd Terminal, and Matarban Deep Sea Port for better regional connectivity, under "the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt

(BIG-B)."

Moreover, Japan also attaches importance to Bangladesh's socio-economic development such as health and education and extends support meeting the needs of Bangladesh.

I am confident that Japan's cooperation in these areas will support Bangladesh's goal to be a middle-income country and then become a developed country, and eventually contribute to further development of our relationship.

Bangladesh, which is located at a key point connecting Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent and has successfully been achieving high economic growth in recent years, is a very attractive destination for the Japanese business community. It is my hope that our economic relations that are marked by a great potential will make a further leap forward in the years to come.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has posed unprecedented challenges to socioeconomic activities in the world and between our two countries. In order to overcome this crisis together with Bangladesh, Japan has provided an emergency budget support loan, grants of medical equipment, and other emergency support through international organizations for Bangladesh.

The pandemic has also heightened uncertainty, and how we secure peace and stability of the region has become an increasingly important challenge. Building a free and open order based on the rule of law and strengthening connectivity in the Indo-Pacific region will lead to peace, stability and prosperity in the region. Japan will continue to work with Bangladesh to realize a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

Last but not least, the year 2022 will mark the 50th anniversary of the estab-

Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister of Bangladesh

Today is the 26th March - our great Independence Day. Bangladesh completes 50 years today since its independence. I extend my heartfelt greetings to the countrymen and expatriate Bangladeshis on the occasion of the golden jubilee of great independence.

The 26 March is the day of establishing self-identity of our nation. It's the day of breaking the shackles of subjugation. On this Independence Day, I recall with deep gratitude the Greatest Bangalee of all times, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, under whose undisputed leadership we have earned our independence. I pay my tributes to four national leaders, three million

martyrs and two hundred thousand dishonoured women of the War of Liberation. My homage goes to all the valiant freedom fighters, including the wounded ones. I extend my sympathies to those who had lost their near and dear ones, and were subjected to brutal torture during the Liberation War. I recall with gratitude our foreign friends who had extended their support during our liberation war.

On the occasion of the golden jubilee of independence, colorful programs have been chalked out from 28 March 2021 to 16 December 2021 and the period from 17 March 2020 to 16 December 2021 is being celebrated as 'Mujib Year' marking the birth centenary of the Father of the Nation. In the wake of coronavirus pandemic, the Golden Jubilee of Independence and the 'Mujib Year' are being celebrated avoiding public gathering following the protocols of hygiene.

The Bangalee nation had fought against oppression and deprivation of Pakistani rulers' for long 23 years under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib. They were compelled to hold general elections in 1970. Bangladesh Awami League led by Bangabandhu won absolute majority in the elections. But the Pakistani rulers adopted repressive measures

Continued to Page 8

lishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Bangladesh. I will join hands with Bangladesh and work together closely to further strengthen our bilateral relationship toward this special year. I express my sincere wishes for the

prosperity of Bangladesh and Japan and a further deepening of our friendship.

Dhonnobad.

Yoshihide Suga

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on the 50th Anniversary of the Independence of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Continued from Page 7

instead of handing over power to the majority party representatives. Calling for independence at the then Racecourse Ground on 7 March 1971 Bangabandhu declared, "The struggle this time is the struggle for our emancipation; the struggle this time is the struggle for independence, Joi Bangla." He instructed the Bangalee Nation to resist the enemies. The Pakistani occupation forces unleashed a sudden attack and started

massacring innocent and unarmed Bangalees on the fateful night of 25 March 1971. They killed thousands of people in different places, including Dhaka. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman formally proclaimed the independence of Bangladesh at the first hour of 26 March 1971. Bangabandhu's proclamation was spread all over the country through telegrams, tele-printers and EPR wireless. The international media also had circulated Bangabandhu's proclamation

of independence. The first Government of Bangladesh took oath on 17 April 1971 in Mujibnagar with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as President, Syed Nazrul Islam as Vice President, Tajuddin Ahmed as Prime Minister, Capt. M Mansur Ali and AHM Kamruzzaman as ministers. The resistance war against the occupying forces began. After a 9-month of bloodshedding liberation war, the final victory was achieved on 16 December. In the 50 years since independence

what we have achieved has been achieved by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League. In just three and a half years of his government, he rebuilt the war-ravaged country. Destroyed roads, bridges, culverts, railways, ports were rebuilt to revive the economy. In 1975, the GDP growth rate exceeded 7%. Bangladesh gained recognition from 116 countries and got the memberships of 27 international organizations. Our constitution was made on the basis of the spirit of the liberation war under his direction within just 10 months. In just three and a half years, he took war-torn Bangladesh to the list of least developed country. While Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib was advancing to build an exploitation-deprivation-free non-communal democratic 'Sonar Bangla' overcoming all obstacles, the anti-liberation forces brutally killed him along with most of his family members on 15 August 1975.

After the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib, the development and progress of Bangladesh came to a halt. The politics of killing, coup and conspiracy started in our beloved motherland. The assassins and their accomplices promulgated the 'Indemnity Ordinance' to block the trial of this heinous murder in the history. Getting the public mandate in 1996, Bangladesh Awami League formed the government after long 21 years. After assuming the office, we took the initiatives to establish Bangladesh as a self-respectful in the comity of nations. Through the introduction of social safety-net programs, poor and marginalized people are brought under government allowances. We made the country self-sufficient in food production with special emphasis on agricultural production. The Ganges Water



Bangladesh's Father of the Nation and first President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with his daughter Sheikh Hasina, the current Prime Minister of Bangladesh

Sharing Treaty was signed with India in 1996. We signed the historic Peace Accord in 1997 with the aim of establishing peace in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. By repealing the 'Indemnity Ordinance', we started the trial of Bangabandhu's assassination.

Forming government in 2009 in consecutive three-terms, Bangladesh Awami League has relentlessly been working to improve the fate of the people inspired by the spirit of the great liberation war. We are implementing the unfinished works of the Father of the Nation. Today, Bangladesh is self-reliant in food production. The poverty rate has come down from 42.5% to 20.5% in the last 12 years. Our sovereign rights over the vast area in the Bay of Bengal have been established through the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes with Myanmar and India. The implementation of the Bangladesh-India Land Boundary

Agreement has put an end to the protracted inhuman life of the enclave people. The nation has become free from stigma by executing the verdict of Bangabandhu murder case. The trial of war criminals continues and the verdict is being executed.

We have formulated the Second Perspective Plan for 2021-2041 and adopted the 8th Five Year Plan. We have started the implementation of 100-year 'Delta Plan 2100' for the first time in the world. Today, the benefits of 'Digital Bangladesh' have been expanded from urban to remote village level.

On the occasion of 'Mujib Year', some 8 hundred 92 thousand homeless people are being provided houses. 70 thousand houses have already been handed over. Another 50 thousand houses are under construction. A total of 9 lakh 98 thousand 346 families have been provided accommodation since 1996. The civic facilities of

the city are being delivered to every village. 99% people are taken under electricity coverage. To keep the economy going offsetting the impacts of Coronavirus, we have so far announced 23 stimulus packages worth Tk 1.24 lakh crore (\$14.8 billion), which is 4.44% of our GDP.

The independence earned through supreme sacrifices of millions of people is the greatest achievement of Bangalee Nation. To ensure that the achievement remains meaningful, all have to know the true history of our great Liberation War and respect the spirit of independence. The spirit of the Liberation War has to be propagated from generation to generations.

The persistent efforts of the last 12 years of the Bangladesh Awami League government have brought the final recommendations for Bangladesh to become a dignified developing country on the eve of the Golden Jubilee of Independence. This is a huge achievement for us.

Under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib, the brave Bangalees liberated the country through the war of liberation within just nine months. I firmly believe that if this trend of development continues, Bangladesh will soon be established as a developed-prosperous country in the world, InshaAllah.

Let us take oath on this auspicious occasion of the golden jubilee of independence imbued with the spirit of the Great War of Liberation, we all together will build hunger-poverty-literacy-free Golden Bangladesh as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Sheikh Hasina

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